

SOCIALISM AND SINGLE TAX

Equality and Co-operation

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ARE the interests of employers and employed mutual and identical? Yes—or there is no God; or if the interests of employer and employee are not identical, if the good of one means the harm of the other, then there must be two Gods—the God of the working man and the God of the boss. One of these two conclusions is absolutely necessary. The only alternative is to reject the idea of God entirely and then we have confusion and never-ending despair. This, then, is my fundamental conclusion, and upon it and true to it I try to build a rational philosophy of relation between myself and all humanity.

There is one divine source of all life, of light, and truth. This source we call God or Good, the all father, or the father of all. This makes the entire race—all colors, creeds, and conditions—a brotherhood, and their mission on earth is to learn the lesson of harmony, to learn to live brotherly. The Golden Rule is the original of every decree of human liberty that has ever been spoken, and only as we base our conclusions upon it and build our social and political relations true to its exacting demands can we hope to make any progress in the settlement of the industrial question, or take one step toward political peace and social justice. It was this conclusion that about six years ago led me to put the Golden Rule up on the walls, as the rule that should govern in our factory. It was not a spontaneous outburst of “goody goodyism,” or “googooism,” or anything of the sort. It was the New Birth that brought me to understand that the law that governs my relation with my fellow-men is as unerring and inexorable as the rules that govern arithmetic.

We are yet in the childhood period of the life of the race. For centuries mankind has been striving to find a short-cut way or quick-acting specific that would give the world the peaceful relation for which the soul longs, and we are beginning to learn that there is no

substitute for justice, that right and wrong, like oil and water, will not mix, and that they cannot abide together in peace. The apparent never-ending strife between capital and labor is nearing its end. Never in the history of the world has public sympathy been so fully with the toilers as at the present time. The forces are now apparent that in due time will carry out the peaceful solution of the labor question in the only rational way that it can ever be settled, that is, with a recognition of the fundamental principle of equality and its application to industry through co-operation.

The introduction of labor-saving machinery during the last fifty years has done much to lighten the burden of human toil. The next rational step is the adoption of the shorter work-day, which must become shorter and shorter as machinery is multiplied until there shall be such a division of labor as will make accessible to all the God-given right to work, for, as it is the mission of the nation to produce great persons, we must understand that healthy, able-bodied men and women cannot be reared by growing them up in idleness. Unless the hands are used for the purpose for which God intended them, how can we use the brain for the purpose for which it was intended? The meaning of this is that the whole man, all men and all women, in whatever condition, have a right to work, have a right, indeed, to become co-workers with God in the establishment of the Kingdom of Harmony (Heaven) here and now, in this life and on this earth.

Co-operation in Distribution next Step.— The trusts are making the application of the cooperative principle in the field of production, they are abolishing the warlike methods of competition and eliminating its dreadful and costly waste. Any combination of men and materials that saves labor and lightens the burden of human toil is in the line of progress and ought to be encouraged, but the trust-makers have not reckoned on the next step, which is just as inevitable as the step that led to the formation of the trusts. This next step is co-operation in the field of distribution and the saving effected by the development of labor-saving machinery, and the organization of the trusts does not belong alone to the trust-makers. This saving is a social product because it would not be possible

except for the combined efforts of employer and employed alike. Indeed, it would not be possible except for the combined labors of hundreds and thousands of men and women who have gone before and who have delved in the dangerous mines, sweltered over the fierce heat of burning furnaces and the melting crucible to unlock the secrets of nature and make the crude ores into highly specialized machines which produce the marvels of modern industry. All of these labors of these unnumbered thousands who have gone before have made possible the triumphs of the modern man over the sources of nature.

It is a crime, not against the revised statutes, but against Almighty God, for a few men to claim the enormous profits that are made possible through this social energy as their own, for individual private use, for the gratification of a depraved taste for vulgar luxuries, which in the end result in destroying the man, both soul and body. These profits are a social product, and should and will yet be socially owned and distributed in the way best calculated to build up the citizenship of the nation. This is to be brought about by a gradual process. The shorter work day is a step toward it, and the next step in the development of industry is the adoption of a system of co-operation in the field of distribution that will recognize the principle to which our government is dedicated, and upon which all humanity must be saved or forever lost. That principle is equality of all men and the right of the humblest citizen—yes, the right of every baby born on the planet to have access to everything needed to develop in that baby the highest possibilities of citizenship.

The sooner employer and employed recognize and strive to build true to this principle of equality the better it will be for the peace of mind of the individual and for the welfare of the nation.